



LITTLE LEVER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
ON THE
HEALTH AND SANITARY CONDITION
OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT OF LITTLE LEVER
FOR THE YEAR

1944

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

LITTLE LEVER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, 1944

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Clerk and Accountant

WILLIAM KELLY

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Urban District of Little Lever
For the year 1944

To the Chairman and Members of the
Little Lever Urban District Council:

I have pleasure in submitting for your approval my Report as Medical Officer of Health on the health and sanitary conditions of Little Lever for the year ended 31st December, 1944.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area

The area of the township is 808 acres. The estimated population is 4,335, compared with 4,944 in the 1931 census. There are 1,544 inhabited houses in the area as against 1,546 in 1943 and 1,443 in the 1931 census. This gives a rate of between three and four persons per house. The rateable value of the district is £20,458 and the sum raised by a penny rate is approximately £78. Social conditions are reasonably good. There is practically no unemployment. The district is largely industrial in character, the chief industries being coal-mining, cotton weaving, paper-making and the manufacture of ebonite and plastics, chemical-manufacturing and dairy-farming.

Births

The number of live births registered in 1944 was 98, as against 83 in 1943. This figure is made up of 48 males (4 illegitimate) and 50 females (1 illegitimate). The birth rate is 22.6 per 1,000 of population, compared with 19.4 in 1943 and a mean rate of 16.3 for the previous five years. The birth rate for England and Wales in 1944 was 17.6.

Still Births

The number of still births in 1944 was 5. Of these, there were 4 males (1 illegitimate) and 1 female. This is equal to a rate of 49 per 1,000 of total births, compared with 24 in 1943.

Deaths

The number of deaths from all causes in 1944 was 60 (32 males and 28 females). This is a decrease of 10 on the figure for 1943. The death rate for 1944 is 13.8 per 1,000 of population, as against 16.4 in 1943, and a mean rate of 15.2 for the previous five years. The death rate for England and Wales in 1944 was 11.6.

Infantile Mortality

The number of deaths of children under one year in 1944 was 5, all males. This gives an increase of 2 on the figure for 1943, and is equal to a rate of 51 per 1,000 of live births as against 36 in 1943, and a mean rate of 40 for the previous five years. The Infantile Mortality Rate for England and Wales in 1944 was 46.

Maternal Mortality

Once again there were no maternal deaths in 1944, thus giving a nil rate per 1,000 of total births, the same as in 1943, and a mean rate of 1.97 for the previous five years. The Maternal Mortality Rate for England and Wales in 1944 was 1.93.

Midwifery Services

There are no resident midwives in the district. Three midwives on the list of midwives engaged by the County Council reside in Farnworth, and are available for the Little Lever area. Each one is readily accessible, as all three are on the telephone and have cars. The service has been quite efficient and satisfactory. A certain proportion of the maternity cases in the district were admitted to Townleys Hospital, Farnworth, but most of the confinements took place in the homes of the patients.

General Provision of Health Services for the District

<u>Clinics and Treatment Centres</u>	<u>Situation</u>	<u>Provided by</u>
Maternity and Child Welfare	Little Lever	Lancashire C. C.
Tuberculosis	Farnworth	" "
School Clinics	Little Lever	" "
Venereal Diseases	Bolton	" "

Infectious Diseases

The following table gives an analysis of the cases of Infectious Diseases during 1944:-

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total Cases</u>	<u>Fe- males</u>	<u>Sent to Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths in Hospital</u>	<u>Total Deaths</u>
		Males	males		
Scarlet Fever	22	6	16	7	-
Diphtheria	1	1	-	1	-
Measles	8	2	6	-	-
Whooping Cough	55	25	30	-	-
Pneumonia	4	3	1	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	-	1	-	-
Erysipelas	2	-	2	-	-
	93	57	56	8	2

Tuberculosis

New cases and Mortality during 1944:-

<u>Age Periods</u>	<u>New Cases</u>				<u>Deaths</u>			
	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-respir.</u>		<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-respirat.</u>	
<u>Years</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
0 to 1								
1 to 5								
5 to 10					1			
10 to 15								
15 to 20								
20 to 25			1					
25 to 35								
35 to 45	2						1	
45 to 55								
55 to 65		1						
65 & upwards	1							
	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
	<u>5</u>		<u>1</u>		<u>1</u>		<u>1</u>	

The death rate from Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System in 1944 was 0.23 per 1,000 of population as against 0.47 in 1943, and a mean rate of 0.41 for the previous five years.

Causes of Death

The following table shows the deaths from all causes in 1944:-

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	-	1
Other forms of Tuberculosis	1	-	1
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	2	-	2
Cancer of all other sites	3	2	5
Intra-cranial Vascular Lesions		4	4
Heart Disease	11	10	21
Other diseases of Circulatory System	2	-	2
Bronchitis	2	1	3
Pneumonia	2	-	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	1	2
Digestive Diseases	-	1	1
Nephritis	-	1	1
Congenital Malformations, etc.	3	-	3
Road Traffic Accidents	1	-	1
Other Violent Causes	1	1	2
All other causes	2	7	9
 Totals:	 32	 28	 60
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Cancer and Malignant Diseases

There were 7 deaths from Cancer and Malignant Disease in 1944 compared with 13 in 1943. This gives a death rate of 1.61 per 1,000 of population as against 3.04 in 1943, and a mean rate of 1.98 for the previous five years.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

No cases of this disease were notified during 1944.

District Nursing Association

The District Nursing Association employs one Nurse, and is affiliated to the County Nursing Association. As in previous years, the Nurse has given excellent service to the community, and has done her work in a most efficient manner, whilst the Committee, backed by the willing and generous support of the general public, have given all the help possible to the Association and have kept it on a sound financial basis.

Hospital Accommodation

The Council have an agreement with the Bury and District Joint Hospital Board for the reception and treatment of cases of Infectious Diseases. Beds are available, as required, at the following Institutions:-

Small-Pox Hospital, Minworth - for cases of Small-Pox.

Florence Nightingale Hospital, Bury - for other Infectious diseases.

Both Hospitals are controlled by the Bury and District Joint Hospital Board, and the retaining fees payable by the Council are:-

Small-Pox - £0- £20 per annum
Other Diseases - £25 per annum

An Ambulance is provided by the Joint Board for the conveyance to the Hospitals of patients suffering from Infectious Diseases.

Voluntary Hospitals Arrangements

The Council subscribe the following amounts:-

Bolton Royal Infirmary	-	£10.10.0d per annum
Manchester and Salford Medical Charities Fund	-	£30. 0.0d per annum
Little Lever District Nursing Association	-	£13.13.0d per annum

The Council have an agreement with the Borough of Farnworth whereby the latter provide an Ambulance service for conveying patients from the District to the various hospitals. This service has been quite satisfactory during the year.

Adoptive Acts in Force

Public Health Acts (Amendment Act) 1890, Part 4
Public Health Acts (Amendment Act) 1907, Parts 2 and 4
Public Health Acts 1925, Part 2, except Sections 22 and 25

Sanitary Accommodation

The types of Sanitary Accommodation with the numbers of each type at the end of 1944 were as follows:-

Privy Middens	16
Closets attached to these Middens	23
Pail closets	4
Waste Water Closets	99
Fresh Water Closets	1,450
Movable Ashbins for Refuse	1,443
Dry Ashpits (excluding Middens)	48
Number of Houses on Water Carriage System	1,512

During the year, one privy closet was converted to a fresh water closet.

Sanitary Inspections

The number of premises visited during 1944 for the purpose of Sanitary Inspections was 60, and the number of nuisances discovered was 36. As a result of 36 Informal Notices and 3 Statutory Notices, 28 nuisances were abated. No legal proceedings were taken.

Bakehouses, Dairies and Cowsheds have been periodically inspected during the year and have been found to be in a fair condition. There are 8 dairy farms in the area with approximately 131 cows between them. Five samples of milk were taken during the year. Of these, one was unsatisfactory, and suitable action was taken.

Factories and workshops have been inspected from time to time, and found to be in a satisfactory condition.

Food shops have also been inspected, but no action has been necessary.

Water Supply

The water supply is from the Irwell Valley Water Board's mains, and is constant. All houses are directly connected, the number of houses with piped supplies being 1,512. No extensions were carried out during 1944.

Sewage Disposal

Sewage disposal was again satisfactory during 1944. The sewage is treated by settlement tanks and percolating filters. No extensions were carried out during the year. Samples of the effluent have been tested periodically by the Inspectors of the Lancashire Rivers Board, and all have been classed as satisfactory. One area, Leadbater Fold, is still without an efficient drainage system, but is to be dealt with under a Clearance Order as soon as the time is opportune.

The sewers have been flushed and the manholes cleaned from time to time during the year.

Owing to labour difficulties, house refuse and the contents of privy closets have only been collected each fortnight, but the system has worked satisfactorily. The collections are made in the Council's covered motor wagon, and the refuse is disposed of by tipping on waste land.

Smoke Abatement

The Council are members of the Manchester Regional Smoke Abatement Committee. The time limit for the emission of black smoke is two minutes per hour. Owing to war conditions, the taking of observations has been in abeyance during the year, but no serious infringements of the rule have been noted.

Housing

Owing to war conditions, no new houses were built during 1944.

Number of Houses owned by the Local Authority

1.	Under 1919 Scheme	113
2.	Under Housing Act, 1923	11
3.	Under Housing Act, 1924	122
4.	Erected during 1936	30
5.	Erected during 1937	38
6.	Erected during 1938	34
	Total:	348

Housing Conditions

Housing conditions are fairly good and the general standard of housing is satisfactory. The prevalent type of house is the four-roomed cottage, of which there are about 900 in the district. There are, however, at least 200 of this type which are well below the general standard. The chief defects found are dampness, low ceilings, old age, absence of bathrooms and positioning without any regard for planning or for the social welfare of the tenants. Too many houses have insufficient access to sunlight and have dreadful outlooks. There is no real over-crowding to

be found, but many families would be really glad of another bedroom. The two-bedroomed house is hopelessly inadequate for most families. A housing scheme of 26 houses was planned for 1939, the intention being to re-house families whose houses had been included in Clearance Areas. Owing to the war, this scheme had to be shelved, and in consequence many condemned houses are still tenanted and, naturally enough, are in a much worse state than they were in 1939.

Town Planning

The Council are members of the Bolton and District Regional Planning Committee, and representatives from the Council attend the Committee meetings and report the proceedings back to the Council. The Council have always made it a golden rule to work in the closest harmony with the Planning Committee.

Disinfection

The number of houses disinfected after Infectious Diseases was 25. The method used is Formic Aldehyde in the sealed room of the house. In addition, two houses were sprayed and fumigated for the eradication of bed bugs.

Public Health Laboratory

Three swabs for suspected Haemolytic Streptococci were sent for examination, but all were negative.

Diphtheria Immunisation

Further progress in the immunising of children was made during 1944. The total number immunised was 90, which is, however, much less than the figure for 1943, when 269 children were immunised. Of this number (90) 58 were pre-school children and 32 were school children. The figures for children immunised up to the end of 1944 are as follows:-

Pre-school children	-	355
School children	-	586

It is estimated that 49% of the pre-school children and 78% of the school children had been immunised by the end of 1944. Immunisations are carried out by the Medical Practitioners in the district, the prophylactic used being Alum Precipitated Toxoid provided by the Public Health Laboratory, Manchester. It is worthy of note that only one case of Diphtheria occurred during 1944, and as this case was a man on leave from the Royal Navy, it would appear that the immunisation campaign has been well worth the effort in this district. Many parents still do not realise the dangers of Diphtheria, nor do they appear to appreciate the benefits of immunisation, but approaches are constantly being made to them in order to persuade them to take advantage of the immunisation scheme. No figures are available for comparison, but the estimate of 78% of the school children is a very creditable percentage, and it is more than probable that the figure compares very favourably with the figures for other areas, but the figure of 49% for pre-school children leaves a good deal to be desired, and it is hoped that this figure may be considerably increased in the near future.

General Observations

During 1944, the general health of the district was quite good. The number of births showed a marked increase as compared with the number of births in 1943, whilst the number of deaths showed a welcome decrease on the figure for 1943. The birth rate is well above the rate for England and Wales, though the death rate compares rather unfavourably with the rate for England and Wales.

There was again a small epidemic of Whooping Cough during the year, 55 cases being notified as against 41 in 1943. All except two were in the 1 to 10 years of age group, but the epidemic was of quite a mild nature with no noteworthy features about it. The number of cases of Scarlet Fever was considerably more than in 1943 (22 as against 6), but here also there were no serious cases. The total number of cases of Infectious Diseases was rather higher than in 1943 (93 as against 72).

Progress in the matter of improving sanitation and housing has once again, owing to the war, been at a standstill. We are still in need of many more houses of a modern type, built in decent surroundings, and a large number of present day houses in the district will certainly need to be done away with in the near future if the district is to have any pretensions to becoming a modern, model village. Much needs to be done in the district, and far-sighted planning for the future is most essential.

The addition of a further year of war to the life of the community has not left any marked effects. There has been no evidence of under-nourishment either in adults or children. The school attendance figures have been maintained at a satisfactory level and the health of the children has been quite good.

The Clinics and Treatment Centres provided by the County Council have again given good service to the community, but it is to be hoped that the present Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic will, as soon as possible, be replaced by a modern clinic. The clinic as it is today can only be described as a makeshift one, and leaves a good deal to be desired.

The Bowling Green and Playing Field provided by the Local Authority have once more completely justified their existence, but more recreational facilities in the district are greatly needed. A community of over 4,000 people requires much more than a single bowling green and a single playing field if it is to develop into a really healthy and social-minded community.

W. MOTTERSHEAD, M.B., Ch.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.

9th October, 1945.

